

# September




## National Health Observances



Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

## September is Fruits & Veggies — More Matters Month

Sponsor: Produce for Better Health Foundation  
(<http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/>) 

Eating fruits and vegetables provides many health benefits. For example, people who eat a healthy, balanced diet — including plenty of vegetables and fruits — can lower their risk for some chronic disease, like heart disease and type 2 diabetes.

However, most of us don't eat enough fruits and vegetables:

- Only 1 in 3 adults eat the recommended amount of fruits every day.
- Only 1 in 4 adults eat the recommended amount of vegetables every day.

The good news? Communities, health professionals, businesses, and families can work together to encourage people to eat more fruits and vegetables.

Make a difference: Spread the word about tips for healthy eating and encourage communities, organizations, families, and individuals to get involved.

### How can Fruits & Veggies — More Matters Month make a difference?

We can all use this month to raise awareness about the importance of eating fruits and vegetables.

Here are just a few ideas:

- Encourage families to make small changes, like keeping fresh fruit within their children's reach or fresh cut carrot sticks in the fridge.
- Motivate local businesses to create healthier workplaces by providing quality foods made with fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Spread the word about programs that support local agriculture.

### How can I help spread the word?

We've made it easier for you to make a difference! This toolkit is full of ideas to help you take action today. For example:

- Add information about fruits and veggies to your organization's website or newsletter.
- Tweet about Fruits & Veggies — More Matters Month.

## September 2013 Toolkit: Fruits & Veggies — More Matters Month

- Host a community event where families can try different fresh foods while learning about local health resources.

### Get the Word Out

#### Sample Media and/or Newsletter or Listserv Announcement

*Cut and paste this text into your newsletter, listserv, or press release. Add local details and quotes from your organization.*

Most people know that eating vegetables and fruits is important for good health – yet most of us still aren't eating enough of them. This September, **[your organization]** is proud to participate in Fruits & Veggies – More Matters Month.

Eating a healthy diet – including plenty of vegetables and fruits – can help you:

- Lower your risk for heart disease and some types of cancer
- Maintain or reach a healthy weight
- Keep your body strong and active

Here are some ideas to help you and your family fit more fruits and vegetables into your day:

- Keep a bowl of fruit handy where the whole family can see it.
- Cut up fruits and veggies ahead of time so they're ready for quick, healthy snacks.
- Challenge your family to try a new veggie or fruit every week.

Remember, eating more fruits and veggies can be fun – and it's worth it! **[Add details about your local activities.]**

- **[Include quote from your organization.]**

For more information, visit **[insert your organization information]**.

## September 2013 Toolkit: Fruits & Veggies — More Matters Month

### Is your organization on Twitter? Send tweets.

Sample Tweets:

- Share your love for fruits and veggies! Send this free e-card: <http://1.usa.gov/11Y4gnq>
- Q. How many fruits and veggies do I need?  
A. Everybody is different, so use this tool to find out: <http://1.usa.gov/MCnUMA>
- Use this locator to find a farmers market near you: <http://1.usa.gov/okPPzA>
- Try these healthy snacks for kids: <http://1.usa.gov/WKA2wC>
- Want help choosing heart healthy foods? Take this shopping list with you to the grocery store: <http://1.usa.gov/16oTNRu>
- Health Tip: For breakfast, top whole-grain toast with peanut butter and sliced bananas.
- Know someone who could use help eating healthy? Use these tips to start the conversation: <http://1.usa.gov/X30mSU>
- Get a personalized daily food plan: <http://1.usa.gov/mOr94d>
- Health Tip: Next time you go shopping, buy vegetables and fruits in a variety of colors.
- Tried any new fruits lately? Get inspired: <http://1.usa.gov/Ao88Fm>
- Check out this list of veggies and try something new: <http://1.usa.gov/xRLzAB>

### Send e-cards

- healthfinder.gov: Fruits & Veggies – More Matters  
(<http://www.healthfinder.gov/StayConnected/ecards/DisplayCard.aspx?CardID=23>)
- CDC: Fruit and Vegetable Budget Tips  
(<http://tools.cdc.gov/ecards/message.aspx?cardid=336&category=197>)

### Post a Web Badge

Add this free Web badge

(<http://www.healthfinder.gov/nho/nhoBadges.aspx#september2>) to your Web site, blog, or social networking profile to show your support for Fruits & Veggies – More Matters Month.

## Get Involved

Take action to increase consumption of veggies and fruits.

1. Host a brown-bag seminar for your employees and invite a nutritionist to discuss easy ways to get the recommended daily servings of vegetables and fruits.
2. Post information about one vegetable or fruit each week on your employee bulletin board with a quick and easy recipe to share.
3. Partner with your local farmers market or community garden to offer vegetables and fruits at discounted prices.
4. Ask a local grocery store representative to present tips on how to save money when buying vegetables and fruits.
5. Conduct a cooking demonstration using recipes chock full of vegetables and fruits.

Adapted from the Produce for Better Health Foundation  
(<http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/>)  at [KStevens@PBHFoundation.org](mailto:KStevens@PBHFoundation.org) for more information and materials.

## Share These Tools

### Health Topics

- Eat Healthy (<http://www.healthfinder.gov/HealthTopics/Category/health-conditions-and-diseases/diabetes/eat-healthy>)
- Healthy Snacks: Quick tips for parents  
(<http://www.healthfinder.gov/HealthTopics/Category/nutrition-and-physical-activity/nutrition/healthy-snacks-quick-tips-for-parents>)
- Help Your Child Stay at a Healthy Weight  
(<http://www.healthfinder.gov/HealthTopics/Category/parenting/nutrition-and-physical-activity/help-your-child-stay-at-a-healthy-weight>)
- Take Steps to Prevent Type 2 Diabetes  
(<http://www.healthfinder.gov/HealthTopics/Category/health-conditions-and-diseases/diabetes/take-steps-to-prevent-type-2-diabetes>)
- Watch Your Weight (<http://www.healthfinder.gov/HealthTopics/Category/health-conditions-and-diseases/diabetes/watch-your-weight>)



### Personal Health Tools

- SuperTracker (Food and Activity Tracker) (<https://www.supertracker.usda.gov/>)
- Personalized Daily Food Plan  
(<http://www.choosemyplate.gov/myplate/index.aspx>)
- Fruits and Vegetables Calculator  
(<http://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/everyone/fruitsvegetables/howmany.html>)
- Heart Healthy Foods: Shopping list  
(<http://www.healthfinder.gov/HealthTopics/Category/health-conditions-and-diseases/heart-health/heart-healthy-foods-shopping-list>)
- Healthy Eating: Conversation starters  
(<http://healthfinder.gov/HealthTopics/Category/health-conditions-and-diseases/diabetes/healthy-eating-conversation-starters>)

### More Information (Related Resources)

- Fruits and Vegetables  
(<http://www.healthfinder.gov/FindServices/SearchContext.aspx?topic=333>)
- Food (<http://healthfinder.gov/FindServices/SearchContext.aspx?topic=1938>)

### Find More Information

- Produce for Better Health Foundation  
(<http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/>)   
Fruits & Veggies – More Matters Month Sponsor
- Why Fruits and Veggies? (<http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/why-fruits-veggies>)  Produce for Better Health Foundation
- Nutrition for Everyone: Fruits and Vegetables  
(<http://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/everyone/fruitsvegetables/>) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- How to Use Fruits and Vegetables to Help Manage Your Weight  
([http://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/healthy\\_eating/fruits\\_vegetables.html](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/healthy_eating/fruits_vegetables.html))  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

## September 2013 Toolkit: Fruits & Veggies — More Matters Month

- Healthy Eating Tips (<http://www.choosemyplate.gov/healthy-eating-tips.html>)  
United States Department of Agriculture
- Daily Food Plans & Worksheets (<http://www.choosemyplate.gov/supertracker-tools/daily-food-plans.html>) United States Department of Agriculture
- Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010  
(<http://www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2010.asp>) U.S. Department of Health & Human Services
- Farmers Market Search (<http://search.ams.usda.gov/farmersmarkets/>) United States Department of Agriculture
- Growing a Healthier You: Nutrition from the Farm to Your Table  
(<http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/KnowYourFarmer.htm>) United States Department of Agriculture
- Healthy Eating on a Budget (<http://www.choosemyplate.gov/healthy-eating-on-budget.html>) United States Department of Agriculture
- Food Groups (<http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/>) United States Department of Agriculture

## Tips to Plan a National Health Observance

Each National Health Observance (NHO) presents an opportunity to educate the public, energize co-workers and community members, and promote healthy behaviors. The NHO toolkits (<http://www.healthfinder.gov/nho/>) have the information and tools you need to get started.

Use the tips in this guide to plan a successful health promotion event.

### Planning:

Planning is critical to the success of any outreach effort. Contact the NHO sponsoring organization several months ahead of time to request up-to-date information and materials (Contact information for each month's sponsoring organization is provided in each toolkit).

- Consider enlisting the help of a community partner to help you plan and promote your event.
- Meet with those who will be valuable in your event coordination. To get started, sit down with potential partners, such as local businesses, local government agencies, key leaders, organizations, and media partners who share an interest in the NHO.
- Recruit volunteers, speakers, and community liaisons.
- Develop new or adapt existing materials to distribute at the event.
- Be sure to get them printed and/or copied in advance.
- Conduct a run-through before the event.

### Promoting:

Develop a publicity and media outreach plan. Designate a media contact from your planning team and make sure they are available to answer questions and follow up on media requests.

- Start by creating a local media list.
- Use local access television, radio, newspaper, and community calendars to promote your event.
- Post event announcements on your Web site. Encourage your partners to post similar announcements on their Web sites.
- Send a press release.
- Engage the media by offering a spokesperson from your organization or the community.
- Post flyers or posters throughout the community: on bulletin boards at local community centers, places of worship, the library, post office, local schools, recreation centers, clinics, pharmacies, stores, and businesses.
- Send flyers to each participating organization for distribution.



### On the Day of the Event:

- Set up tables, chairs, and a check-in table prior to your event.
- Make plenty of sign-in sheets. Create a separate sign-in sheet for members of the media.
- Don't forget the refreshments!
- Make signs to direct participants and reporters to your event.


### Tracking Media Coverage:

If you are distributing information to the media, plan ahead of time to track your coverage. There are both paid and free resources to track media coverage.

Free media tracking resources search for news articles based on your specific search term(s) and a date range. Some tracking services will send automatic e-mail alerts to notify you when your event and/or keywords are mentioned.

Paid media tracking typically captures a wider range of media stories (both print and online) than free Internet search tools. Paid media tracking sources search within certain locations, news outlet types, and/or specific dates. Some paid media tracking tools offer e-mail alerts and the ability to search archived Web and print news; they also allow users to tailor searches to obtain the most relevant media stories. Other paid media services monitor all forms of social media, including blogs, top video and image-sharing sites, forums, opinion sites, mainstream online media, and Twitter.

Be sure to share media coverage with your community partners, stakeholders, and all those who helped you plan and promote your event. Post a summary of media coverage on your organization's Web site. No matter the size or success of your event, remember that your efforts are key to educating the public about important health issues.

Last but not least, share your feedback and results with us here at [healthfinder.gov](http://healthfinder.gov). You can contact us at [info@nhic.org](mailto:info@nhic.org) or send us a tweet @healthfinder (<http://twitter.com/Healthfinder>) .



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